First description of the nest of the Golden-breasted Puffleg *Eriocnemis mosquera*

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The Golden-breasted Puffleg *Eriocnemis mosquera* is restricted to montane regions of Colombia and Ecuador, occurring chiefly between 2600 and 3300 m altitude, with records as low as 1200 m and up to 3600 m (Hilty & Brown 1986). Its habitat includes stunted and elfin woodland and shrubby areas near the treeline (Hilty & Brown 1986). Its nest appears not to have been described previously (Hilty & Brown 1986, Schuchmann 1988, C. Hinkelmann).

We report here a nest of this species found at 3700 m altitude in Puracé National Park in the Central Cordillera of the Andes, southern Colombia (2°19'N, 76°22'W). The nest was found on 28 November 1988, on the slopes of Volcán Puracé, in a region of low temperatures and high rainfall. This observation also represents the greatest altitude at which the species has ever been recorded.

The nest had been built on the end of a slender branch, hanging down from a rock overhang. It was situated c. 2 m above a mountain stream and was protected from approach by the overhang on one side and the stream and a bog on the other. The overhang may also have protected the nest at least partly from rain.

The nest was a cup, constructed from creamy-coloured plant down on a base of moss and sticks. The rim of the cup was doughnut-shaped and had an external diameter of c. 10 cm. The internal depth was c. 5 cm. The nest's situation prevented close approach but an adult attended it, sitting for long periods and thereby suggesting that the nest contained eggs.

With the exception of *E. glaucopoides,* which is found in Bolivia and Argentina, the genus *Eriocnemis* is restricted to the Andes of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. The only previous description of the nest of any member of the genus is that by Schuchmann (1988) for the Sapphire-vented Puffleg *E. luciani*. The nests of both species are of a form common in the family Trochilidae (Snow 1985, Schuchmann 1988).

The position of the nest described above, under an overhang, may be important for protection from rain at such high altitudes and from low temperatures: a nest with 2 eggs of the Shining Sunbeam *Aglaeactis cupripennis* found on the same day, c. 1 km away at c. 3800 m (above the treeline) was similarly placed, on the end of a hanging root, under a peat overhang. The nest of *E. luciani* described by Schuchmann (1988) was at 3500 m and was also protected from above, by thick layers of grass. Since such protection provides a warmer microhabitat (Calder 1973, 1974), in addition to its shelter from rain, it may be general for hummingbirds living at high altitudes.

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Intraspecific variation in the natal pterylosis of the Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Myionectes oleagneus* (Tyrannidae)

by Charles T. Collins

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The nestlings of the Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Myionectes (Pipromorpha) oleagneus* have been described as having "sparse but long grey natal downs" (Skutch 1960: 568). This paper provides detailed data on the natal pterylosis of this Neotropical tyrant flycatcher.

A total of 8 specimens from 3 nests was collected c. 5 miles north of the town of Arima in Arima Valley, St George Co., Trinidad. Three young collected from a nest (A) on 20 June 1963 had pin feathers just beginning to erupt through the skin (Stage B—Wetherbee 1957: 356), while 3 nestlings collected from a nest (B) 17–19 June 1963 and 2 from a third nest (C) on 22 July 1964 were all newly hatched (Stage A—Wetherbee 1957). All specimens were examined under a dissecting microscope and the number and distribution of natal downs (neossoptiles) recorded (Table 1). The terminology for neossoptile tracts and regions within tracts follows Wetherbee (1957).

All 8 specimens had neossoptiles present in 6 of the 7 tracts and regions bearing downs (coronal and occipital regions of the capital tract, spinal, scapular and femoral tracts and greater secondary coverts). Only 3 specimens, however, all from nest A, had neossoptiles present in the orbital region of the capital tract (Table 1).

The total number of neossoptiles present in single specimens ranged from 34 to 62. On the other hand, the variation among 6 of the 8 specimens was only 48–57 total neossoptiles. Choosing a single pattern and number of neossoptiles to characterize this species is difficult due to the observed degree of intraspecific variation. One approach is to utilize the average number (rounded to the nearest whole number) of neossoptiles present in